

## **Historic, archived document**

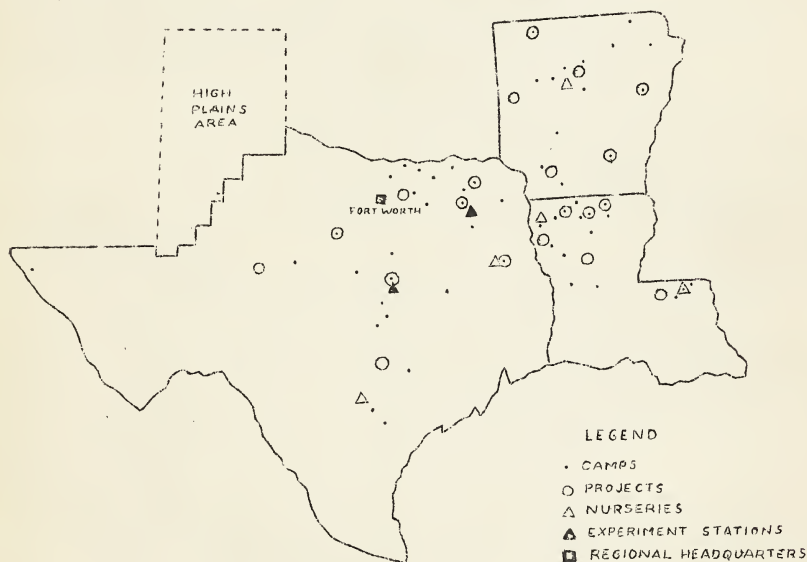
Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.





# SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE NEWS

Vol. 1, no. 1, [1956]



REGION 4  
COMPRISING STATES OF LOUISIANA,  
ARKANSAS AND TEXAS, EXCEPT HIGH  
PLAINS AREA

Volume 1.

Number 1.

SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE NEWS

Region 4: Louisiana, Arkansas and  
Texas, except high plains region

LOUIS P. MERRILL, REGIONAL CONSERVATOR  
Headquarters, Neil P Anderson Building  
Fort Worth, Texas

Edited and published monthly at the Regional Office  
by the Division of Information and Education.

TO THE COOPERATING FARMERS AND SCS EMPLOYEES  
OF REGION FOUR

From the standpoint of field activities the Soil Conservation Service is concerned with that control of rainfall which would reduce, (a) runoff, (b) erosion of agricultural and grazing lands, (c) the covering of fertile valley lands with comparatively unproductive erosional debris, and (d) the filling of stream channels, reservoirs and ditches with the products of erosion. Such control would have an important direct effect toward reducing the volume of water entering the streams, thus minimizing the hazard of floods.

The desired control is secured by the retirement of excessively erosive land from cultivation, the practical use of various adaptations of thick growing vegetation, and the use of engineering structures and mechanical procedures where applicable.

The needs and adaptability of the land are determined by careful surveys of soils, slopes, land cover and degree of erosion. This information plus an economic survey of the farm constitute the basis for developing a well rounded coordinated program of erosion control and economical land use in cooperation with the individual landowner and operator.

The major return to the Government from the cooperation extended to landowners in project and camp areas is from those farmers outside these areas who visit the work, study the operations and then apply the measures on their own farms at their own expense. For this reason the technical men of the Service and the cooperating farmers must see that a complete job is done on each farm under agreement and that the measures used are applied in such an economical, sensible, practical sort of way that the visiting farmer will not say, "The Government can afford this but I can't;" but will say instead, "Why didn't I think of doing this on my farm before?"

*Louis C. Merrill*

## FOREST STAND IMPROVEMENT FOR EROSION CONTROL

By  
C. B. Webster  
Regional Forester

"Is not forest stand improvement for erosion control rather far-fetched?" is a question we often hear. Forest stand improvement removes vegetation from the land. Vegetation helps build up soil and reduce erosion. Then why cut the trees? A negative answer could be, "Why remove brush from an area desired for pasture?" The prompt reply to that question is, "To get more and better grasses on the land so the owner can maintain and improve erosion control at the same time he is providing more and better food for his stock." The owner may not be "erosion-conscious" but if he improves and maintains his pasture to secure sustained capacity he automatically insures for the pasture good protection from erosion. The results are what count in the long run.

So it is with forest stand improvement. Any cutting naturally removes vegetation and increases the erosion hazard. Careful cutting increases this hazard to the least degree and likewise encourages the establishment of reproduction, grasses and shrubs that develop a new ground cover and help build up the forest floor. Most of the forested land in Region 4 is suitable for timber cropping. If not primarily suited for cropping it is valuable protection forest that can furnish limited supplies of fuel wood and posts as a by-product. Even in protection forests stand improvement can be worth while. When the owner learns that by cutting the poor trees and leaving the best, and that by judicious thinning of dense stands he not only improves rate of growth but quality and sale value of his timber and obtains from the poor trees and limbs the fire wood, posts and poles he needs on the farm, he has learned how to manage timber as a paying crop and will be very likely to continue to so manage it. With the woods under management adequate erosion control for the wooded area and lower slopes is assured in almost every case.

Recommended stand improvement in Region 4 based on the rule, "cut the worst and leave the best," calls for the removal of trees from the lower story as well as the upper story. The kind of tree and its condition is the guide, rather than what story of the stand the tree occupies.

Sometimes we are asked, "Why not poison or girdle the trees to come out instead of cutting them?" The answer is, "A poisoned or girdled tree has little or no value thereafter, while a tree cut down can be made into fuel, pulpwood, fence posts, sawlogs and many other items useful on a farm or having sale value. Utilization is essential. (lose utilization is almost always necessary to make the woods pay highest returns. It is said that meat packers utilize every part of the hog but his squeal. The more nearly the farm woods owner learns to utilize every part but the bark of every tree cut the more value his timber crop will have for him and the better the erosion control that will result.

## BEST OF THE MONTH

A TRUE STORY\*

By

Victor E. Kennedy  
Associate Technician  
SCS-22-T Winnsboro

Business retrenchments several years ago forced John Smith, 27, out of his job. He returned to the family farm near Winnsboro, Texas.

John Smith found nothing of encouragement on the farm where he expected to make a livelihood. Sheet erosion and gullies throughout the years had taken a terrific toll of topsoil from the formerly productive land. Pastures were grown up in weeds and persimmon sprouts. His herd of cattle consisted of one scrub bull, five cows producing scarcely enough milk for family use, two calves half-starved and "boney", hardly strong enough to stand at the feed trough.

Improper farm management had allied itself with uncontrolled erosion to "get" the Smith family farm.

John Smith was young and energetic. He worked long and tedious hours tilling what was left of the soil. But, according to his own story, the system of farming that he practiced (if it could be called a system) was the same as that of past years, which had led to the virtual destruction of what was once a highly productive farm.

John Smith's first year of work went for naught; as did the second and the third. The soil simply would not produce. Little wonder the young farmer lost hope, lost heart. Figuratively, John Smith drifted into a "rut" as deep as the deepest gully on the farm.

During the early fall of 1935 Camp SCS-22-T was established at Winnsboro. John Smith learned of the soil conservation program which was to be instituted in an area that included his farm. He became interested. Somewhere within him there still remained a spark of ambition. In the program of the Soil Conservation Service he saw opportunity; a ray of hope.

\*For Obvious Reasons, Name is Fictitious



## A TRUE STORY--(Concluded)

The young farmer signed a Cooperative Agreement with the Winnsboro Camp and pledged himself and his family to carry out the terms of the agreement to the limits of his meager resources. After all he had nothing to lose!

John Smith worked as he had never worked before. He planned, he schemed. He could see a definite goal ahead and was determined to reach it.

The Soil Conservation Service program of work on the farm was completed on Christmas Eve, 1935. On that day John Smith said, "I have just begun to work".

A recent inspection of the farm revealed the following: Strip crops growing on the cultivated fields; well constructed terraces meandering across the slopes where they were needed; weeds cut in the pasture by a borrowed mower; pasture seed planted; steep and eroded slopes taken out of cultivation; fences rearranged; check dams in the gullies. In short, a complete erosion control program was installed and a definite program of proper farm management was being followed.

In one of the old pastures was found 9 registered Herefords, including a bull. In the barn were two well formed Hereford calves.

John Smith spent more than an hour discussing with great pride the benefits already apparent and those that would accrue as a result of the Soil Conservation Service program on his farm. He remarked that he had fewer acres to cultivate, but that cultivation of the best acres on the farm would be more intensive. "Fetter than that," he said, "my farm will be protected from devastating erosion."

He continued: "It's great to be a farmer, especially when a fellow knows that he is definitely building for the future. Believe me, I'm out of the 'rut' now."

The Technical Staff of Camp SCS-22-T is proud of John Smith!



GOPHER CONTROL

By

Homer G. Towns  
Regional Biologist

The pocket gopher (sometimes misnamed a salamander) is a small underground burrowing animal belonging to group of animals known as the rodents.

This animal because of his burrowing habits proves a menace to many of the engineering phases of the applied Soil Conservation program. He is also in many cases destructive to the crops of a farm, more especially on the vegetation of pasturelands.

The runways of pocket gophers, by allowing water to go through a terrace or around structures in ditches or outlet channels or under the vegetation placed in outlet channels, may cost hundreds of dollars in maintenance of such control measures.

The Soil Conservation Service in cooperation with the farmers is very definitely justified in trying to keep these animals to the minimum on farms where engineering measures are applied as a means of erosion control.

Rodent control work by poisoning is being carried out, wherever necessary, on cooperating farms throughout Region 4. Most of the infested area under agreement in Texas has been covered by poisoning crews. This includes approximately 60,000 acres in three Soil Conservation Service projects, and eleven ECW camps. Gopher control work has also been going on in the infested areas in Louisiana and Arkansas. Figures on the acreage poisoned have not yet come to the Regional Office.

The poisoning work has been done from recommendations and under direct supervision of men connected with the U. S. Biological Survey, who have had many years experience in rodent control work. From checking back on representative farms in each project and camp area, getting the opinion of the farmers, from reports of the technical men in the field and from the men of the Biological Survey who helped to supervise the work, it is indicated that from 85 to 95 percent of the gophers were killed by one poisoning operation.



STOP THE FIRES!!

By

C. B. Webster,  
Regional Forester

Help stop fires if you would stop erosion. What fires? Woods fires, prairie fires, pasture fires, meadow fires.

Woods fires destroy humus, duff, litter, young trees and shrubs. Woods fires injure the larger trees that are valuable for home use or sale. Woodlands can retard erosion only when these materials that fire destroys are left on and in the soil. Burned grass land has no humus, no litter, too little cover and hence no ability to retard soil washing.

Unburned woodland and unburned grass lands are the two best and most economical methods yet found to hold soil in place, conserve moisture, reduce flood damage and increase underground water supplies. If you would practice soil conservation and help prevent erosion, then, by all means, stop the fires!

Do you like to hunt? Fires drive out and kill out the game. Do insects bother your crops? Plenty of game birds on the farm will do more toward controlling insects than will fire. Stop the Fires! Nature will repay you well. The Soil Conservation Service and your State Forest Service can help you.

## THE FARM'S BADGE OF HONOR

In driving over the area served by the East Cadron Creek Project Soil Conservation Service an attractive and significant sign is often seen in front of the residence on a farm, "Keep the Soil and Water at Home".

The sign on the farmstead tells a story. It shows that the farm manager is a cooperator with the Soil Conservation Service of the United States Department of Agriculture. It shows that he has signed a Cooperative Agreement, understands his part of the plan of erosion control and has entered on the work. The sign points out a farm upon which a plan of land use and farm management has been advanced, and contour ridging, contour cultivation, strip-cropping, terracing and the rotation of crops have become a definite part in the operation of the farm; a farm upon which a pasture and a woodlot are recognized as croplands worthy of care and consideration. The sign shows that the farmer has finished the minimum requirements of his Cooperative Agreement and is now entitled to this sign which becomes the farm's badge of honor.

The sign indicates to the Cooperator's neighbors and to others who pass the farm that soil is being held in place, moisture is being conserved, fertility improved, and a program for correct land use through a balanced system of farming is in operation on that farm.

\*\*\*\*\*

## BERMUDA GRASS MAKES GOOD MEADOW

Fourteen Acres Yields 28 Tons Hay

An old peach orchard on eroding and gullied land twelve years ago has been transformed into a productive meadow by B. C. Balch, a Conway County, Arkansas dairyman. This farmer's experience shows that Bermuda grass with the aid of hop clover and Dallis grass, properly started and carefully maintained, affords protection to eroding land and yield of hay with income in dairy returns.

Mr. Balch's experience with Bermuda grass in both pasture and meadow covers many years. His 14-acre meadow is a striking example of what can be done with thin, gullied land; gullies so steep that they could not be crossed with a mowing machine. The tract now in meadow, was set 12 years ago in Bermuda grass as soon as the old peach trees were pulled. Heavy applications of barnyard manure were applied. This practice was continued, the spreader going over at least a portion of the meadow every year since. Hop clover came in to do its part in revegetating without the expense of seeding. Dallis grass also made its appearance. The three are still persistent and on February 19 when the temperature was freezing, hop clover was beginning to show green in the dense Bermuda sod.

Last year's yield of hay was a record of which Mr. Balch might well be proud. He received 48 tons from 1 1/2 acres. The first cutting was made about the first of June. The yield was 22 tons, mostly hop clover. The next showed Bermuda as the principal grass in the mixture. After the third cutting for the season the Bermuda made an excellent come-back, leaving a very desirable cover for land during the winter and early spring. Last season was very favorable for meadows with plenty of rain and a late frost.

Mr. Balch is a successful dairyman, milking at the present 32 cows and having in all 60 head of cattle. He therefore makes satisfactory use of hay and grazing. Heavy applications of barnyard manure are applied to meadow and pasture land. He has a pasture of Bermuda with some white clover and a little Dallis grass. Last year this pasture of 32 acres, carried 40 head of cattle. Under practice on Mr. Balch's farm it requires, he says, about four years to bring Bermuda sod and hop clover to yield a full crop of hay. Pastures and meadows with Bermuda as the principal crop require patience and persistence, he states but are well worth while. With ample manuring and with proper management in grazing and cutting, Mr. Balch has secured good pasture and meadowland.

The experience of this farmer-dairyman shows that eroded land may be protected, revived and rebuilt, and income from hay and grazing obtained while this is being done. Of further importance is the fact that his 1 1/2-acre meadow is worth much to him and his descendants in potential yield, because of his land use practice.

Mr. Balch utilizes his pasture and meadow land to supplement his cultivated acreage. His farm contains 200 acres, yet he cultivates but 40, approximately 20% of the acreage, the remainder being devoted to such purposes as grazing and hay. He mows his pastures at least twice a year, and these pastures carry his cattle through the winter.

\*\*\*\*\*

#### FINDS SERICCA USEFUL PLANT

##### Perennial Legume Binds Soil and Affords Forage

*Lespedeza sericea*, a perennial legume which he has been growing on his farm for a few years, will become a useful plant in erosion control in this part of the humid region, according to George Maddox's observation. A few years ago Mr. Maddox, a White County, Arkansas farmer, a Cooperator with the Soil Conservation Service, East Cadron Creek Project, secured only one-fourth teaspoonful of *sericea* seed which he planted. Fortunately he received 20 plants from sowing. By special care in saving seed and by transplanting seedlings he secured a stand on one-fourth acre two years ago. Last summer he had *sericea* as a seed plot in rows three feet apart. He seeded it as well in several small areas as cover crops and also in old washes. The plants made excellent growth at the same time serving as a good soil binder. This season Mr. Maddox will have many more plants and plans to observe results carefully.

REDTOP MAKES GOOD MEADOW STRIPS

Redtop, (Agrostis alba), is well adapted for the meadow strips in the land use plan of the S-C-S. This is especially true on many farms of Southern and Central Arkansas. It makes a good turf for soil protection, and often this grass is the best, sometimes the only hay plant suitable to meadow strips where terrace outlet cover is desirable as hay for animals on the farm. Redtop grass makes a very good sod which will endure reasonable trampling while being grazed. Lespedeza is often used as a mixture with Redtop; sometimes hop clover, or White Dutch Clover, is sown with the grass where the soil and the situation are favorable for mixtures.

In comparison with some other grasses for hay Redtop lacks palatability. It also deteriorates rapidly when it stands until over-ripe. Orchard grass, for instance, usually yields larger amounts of hay of better quality, and furnishes more grazing, yet orchard grass will not adapt itself to the meadow situations where Redtop thrives.

There is more than one form of Redtop. One with large, erect stems and broad coarse leaves is generally sown for hay and the seed are handled by dealers. Another form has spreading stems that may lie on the ground or creep. The spreading form may be mistaken for a more slender species with creeping stems and finer leaves, called "Creeping Bent". Forms of "Creeping Bent" are used for golf courses and lawns. Redtop grass is easily established in many portions of Arkansas, and is not an expensive grass to maintain as the basis of a good permanent meadow.



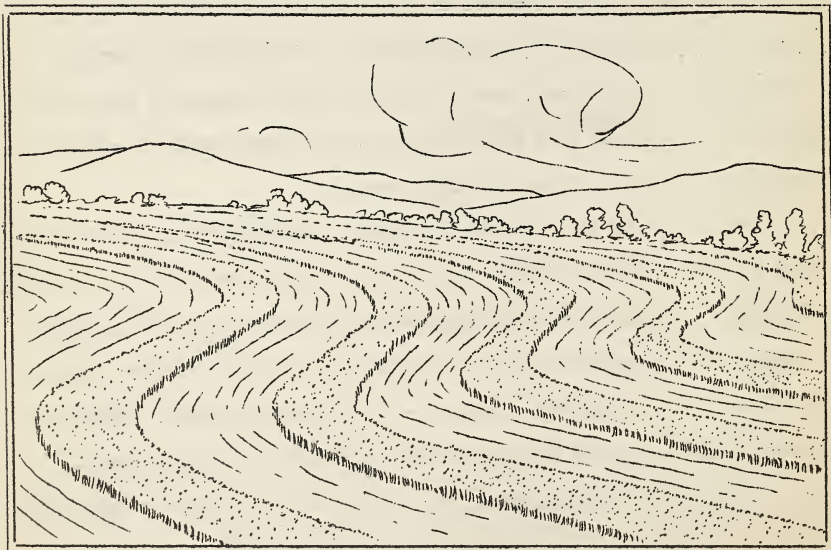
ENROLLEES SAVE ARKANSAS HOME FROM FIRE

By

Tom Cowan, Supt.  
SCS-Lpk-12

When Mrs. W. L. Gates cried, "Fire! Fire!" as the milkhouse at the porch of her home started to burn, she did it only in excitement, never expecting for a moment that it could be heard or hooded. Mrs. Gates and a neighbor were alone on the farm about five miles west of Arkadelphia, Arkansas when the fire broke out. Yet, suddenly as if out of thin air twenty CCC boys appeared, the furniture was removed, the flames extinguished and the furniture returned.

The men had been at work on the farm of Henry Schriober adjoining the Gates farm. Both farms are under Cooperative Agreement for erosion control with the SCS Camp at Friendship. Mrs. Gates was heard and Foreman H. L. Hopkins immediately took his crew over in answer to the call. The milkhouse and 300 baby chicks were lost in the fire, but the house was saved except for a portion of the roof.



## FIELD WORK

By

Edwin Enloe, Enrollee  
SCS-La-9, Mansfield.

Things are being done.

Much is being accomplished in the field. The boys have really taken an interest in their work and are beginning to understand the good that they are accomplishing.

There is a lot of keen competition between the different crews and this tends to create good natured workers.

There are numbers of different kinds of work now being carried on, such as sodding to prevent erosion, fire lanes to prevent fire hazards, fence building, and tree planting. Already this month fifty thousand black locust trees have been planted and over thirty-five hundred square yards of sod have been placed in the outlet ditches to prevent washing away of the soil.

The program of the Soil Conservation Service is one that is really beneficial to mankind; it not only helps those that the work is being done for, but it also gives a lot of valued experience to the workers. They can really learn something from their activities in the field. Each boy that learns something in the field will carry this information on with him and when he goes home he will probably apply his knowledge to benefit his own farm and in this way there will be many that will become acquainted with his work.

The technical staff is continually planning new work and we hope our work will be even more successful in the future.



VETCH PROTECTS FIELD FROM  
EROSION

When Dr. R. E. Smith of Minden, Louisiana, puts in a field of vetch, apparently he needs to be but little concerned about lack of rainfall, if the crop which he has just received is to be taken for a measure. This field of vetch seen from the Minden-Ruston Highway presented a mass of brilliant green heavy growth well over knee high. Anyone going into the field found this thick growth even in portions of the area which had been undergoing serious erosion in the past. Naturally, the yield was somewhat lower on these areas, yet the vetch in its cover here proved its beneficial powers both as a soil improving and soil binding crop. There are six terraces on the field. The vetch was planted as a cover and green manure crop and will be plowed under. The yield was estimated from seven test spots of 4'6" by 4'10". These spots were chosen in parts of the field as representative of the general yield at those points. The average for the field was approximately 4 tons per acre. The average was cut down some by the yield on the higher portions of the field which did not produce as highly as other parts.

This vetch on Dr. Smith's farm has done an excellent job of controlling erosion in addition to its value as a green manure crop. The heavy growth of the vetch furnished a good cover for the soil with its thick stem and root mass slowing down the rapid runoff and holding water on the field to be absorbed into the ground.

Winter cover crops are an important phase of any erosion control program. Among other values, winter cover crops provide necessary protection to the land during the usually heavy rainy season; prevent leaching; add organic matter, thereby increasing water holding capacity of the soils.

\*\*\*\*\*

A CONSERVATION YEAR!

In the past year greater progress was made in saving and developing the nation's natural resources than in any previous year in this country's history. Work completed in protecting agriculture from erosion, planting of new forests, conservation of wild life and game are a few of the many things done by the Civilian Conservation Corps.

Mansfield (La.) Realife

### ANTOINE CREEK

There is a wide-awake Soil Conservation Association working on the program in the Antoine Creek Project. This Association was organized before the work was begun and since that time the officers and members of the Association have rendered valuable assistance in carrying on the program of work. The Association holds meetings monthly to discuss problems which arise and to become better acquainted with the program of the Soil Conservation Service.

Mr. P. W. Bumgardner, President of the Association, and Mr. James B. Coffey, Vice-President, have exhibited excellent leadership in directing the activities of the Soil Conservation Association. It is through their leadership that the interest of the people as a whole has been focused on the program the Soil Conservation Service is adopting on each individual farm.

\*\*\*\*\*

### KENTWOOD

The Soil Conservation Association at Kentwood, Louisiana, was organized here in July 1935 and the following officers elected:

President,	W. B. Travis
Vice-President,	W. C. Bailey
Secretary-Treasurer,	Ralph Napier
Committeemen,	C. P. Schwartz and O. C. Lewis

Since the organization of this Association an active interest has been shown by the farmers of the area. To date Camp SCS-La-19 has received 64 invitations to enter into Cooperative Agreements in soil conservation, these invitations representing an acreage of over 12,000.

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS INTERESTED  
IN LOUISIANA EROSION CONTROL WORK

Keen interest in the erosion control work being done in the Minden project area has been evidenced on many occasions, according to W. E. Dee, project manager. "The staff of the Minden project is always glad of the opportunity of conducting high school boys and girls on trips over the area," Mr. Dee states. "Most of these students come from farm homes and we feel that by showing them the actual field application of the different phases of the erosion control program, that many of them will be responsible for carrying the story of the work into the homes from which they come."

Recent school groups conducted on a tour of the Minden area included nine members of the Future Farmers organization of the Evergreen High School and 18 students from the Springhill school.

"These student visitors showed a real interest in the work," Mr. Dee said.

\*\*\*\*\*

Mt. Hermon, Louisiana,  
March 3, 1936.

Mr. D. A. Foil, Supt.,  
SCS-La-18,  
Mt. Hermon, Louisiana.

Dear Sir:

I am writing you this letter to let you know how much I appreciate the erosion control work the CCC Camp has done on my farm, which is under Agreement with the SCS. We consider that you are helping this community with a very valuable service.

Assuring you of my cooperation in every way, I am

Yours very truly,

(Signed)

G. H. Ott.

## FARMERS "SOLD" ON STRIP CROPPING

By

Mack McConnell, Associate Agronomist  
Carisso Creek Project, Nacogdoches

Farmer Cooperators with the Carisso Creek Research Project are "sold" on strip cropping as an erosion control measure. The majority of the Cooperators have visited at one time or another the Duck Creek Research Project at Lindale, Texas, where they were shown the value and soundness of this phase of the program of the Soil Conservation Service. Strip cropping has been "preached" by the Technical Staff and the value of this means of erosion control so pointed out, that the Agronomy Division has been able to lay out and plant strips without one objection from Cooperators as to the width, length and amount of land which has been put under strips.

Let's see what some of the Cooperators have to say about strip cropping:

J. J. HALTOM: "Strip cropping is the thing I have been looking for. Those strips seem to take the place of terraces, keep the land from washing, cost very little, provide a feed crop and help to improve the soil. I am sold on the entire Soil Conservation Service program."

J. D. PARRISH: "I did not go to Lindale to see the soil conservation work there, but I believe you boys know what you are doing. Here is my farm; lay out the strips according to the best methods, regardless of how much land you use. I am going to watch the results carefully." Since the oats have come to a good stand on the strips planted Mr. Parrish states he is more than ever sold on the idea of strip cropping.

DR. D. D. GILES, Professor of Animal Husbandry, Stephen F. Austin State Teachers College, signed an ECW Cooperative Agreement on the College Dairy Farm. Dr. Giles says, "Since the oats have come up I can see your idea of strip cropping. I am particularly interested in the strips since they furnish a feed crop and at the same time help protect the land from washing. The border strip you planted will provide a place at the end of rows to turn on. It will also keep the edges of the field from washing back into the cultivated land and further provides a feed crop along the fence where usually one gets a weed crop. This stripped field represents a beautiful picture of a wonderful new program in soil conservation."

18.

ROY and ERNEST SMITH of the R. D. Smith farm could hardly wait until their terraces were planted to oats. They said: "Make the strips wide and do us a good job. We believe in stripping every terrace since it cuts down a great deal on the cost of maintenance."

The Cáríaso Creek Project Staff has adopted the practice of stripping every terrace built as a regular part of the erosion control program.

\*\*\*\*\*

#### CONTOUR CULTIVATION FOR ALL ACRES

"The Cooperator agrees to practice contour cultivation on fields Nos. 1 and 3 --". This sentence, with different field numbers, is written into each Cooperative Agreement made between farmers and ECW Camp SCS-19-T at Jacksonville, Texas. Contour cultivation is an important phase of a complete erosion control program. Rows on the contour conserve moisture as well as prevent erosion by checking the rapid run-off of rain water.

Mr. A. E. Simpson, a progressive farmer of the Jacksonville Camp Area, is a strong supporter of contour tillage (as opposed to up and down hill cultivation), not only as a good practice to be followed in row crop tillage, but also for the protection of orchard areas. He says that contour cultivation in his orchard, along with terraces, will help to control erosion and consequently keep the roots of the trees from being exposed to the sun and drying action of the winds, and will conserve moisture that will be needed for the growth of the fruit trees.

Mr. Simpson recently planted 11,075 peach trees and 300 plum trees on 120 acres of his farm. The trees were planted on 45 miles of contour lines and 5 miles of terraces. all lines were located by the use of a level and level rod, thus eliminating any guess work.

Terraces in the orchard were built to Soil Conservation Service specifications. Since there was no meadow, pasture or forest area upon which to dump excess water from the terraces, an outlet channel, protected by sod and several permanent structures, was constructed.

The orchard was seeded to oats for the purpose of furnishing a cover and green manure crop. The oats withstood all freezes and are affording an excellent protective cover for the soil.

Mr. Simpson says he is convinced that orchard areas should have just as complete erosion control protection as all other farm acres.



## PASTURES SHOULD BE MOWED

By

Dennis C. Lentz, Jr. Technical Foreman  
Cariage Creek Project, Nacogdoches

In addition to conserving the water in pastures by contour ridging it is also necessary to control weed growth in order to secure the best growth of grass.

If a pasture is not mowed the growth of weeds, which are poor erosion control plants, will materially lower the carrying capacity of the pasture. Weeds not only choke out and shade out the grasses, but also use up an appreciable amount of the available moisture. This, of course, causes a slower growth of the grass and consequently means that the carrying capacity of the pasture is lowered.

Recommendations made to Cooperators in the Cariage Creek Project area are that pastures must be mowed at least twice a year to secure maximum efficiency. The first mowing should be in the early summer, when the weeds are out high. Later if they tend to branch out after the high cutting they should be cut low in the fall before the branches make seeds.

\*\*\*\*\*

## FARMER SAYS GOPHER CONTROL PRACTICAL

Control of Pocket Gophers is just another job on a well managed East Texas farm, says J. H. Mauritzen, a Cooperator with the Jacksonville, Texas Camp. "Sure, I'll be glad to furnish potatoes for poisoning gophers on my farm and on my neighbors' farms, too," Mr. Mauritzen said. "You will not find many gophers on my farm except a few along the fence where they have crossed over from other farms during the last few weeks," he continued.

"Gophers were at one time a constant worry to me. They damaged crops, gardens, fruit trees and were continually the cause of gullies starting and terraces breaking. I've about gotten rid of them though. I have a lot of sandy land and still grow peanuts and other crops which attract gophers. But I keep them pretty well trapped out. Poisoning is a faster method, and cheaper, but any farmer who wants to rid his place of gophers can do so by persistent trapping."

A report from the foreman of the gopher poisoning crew substantiated Mr. Mauritzen's statement. Only a few gopher mounds were found along his fence line where the gophers had come in from other farms.

Mr. Mauritzen has a 91 acre farm. He grows a variety of crops and is a dairy farmer. He grows legumes "for the land's sake" and too much emphasis cannot be placed on feed crops to suit him. Of his own accord Mr. Mauritzen has been using good soil conservation methods in his farming operations for a number of years.

He is a 100 percent Cooperator with the Technical Staff of the Jacksonville Camp.

\*\*\*\*\*

R. L. HARTMAN DEMONSTRATES VALUE OF  
STRIP CROPPING

R. L. Hartman, whose farm is two miles north of Troy, Texas, has demonstrated the value of strip cropping on his farm and has become an enthusiast for this particular phase of the erosion control program of the Soil Conservation Service.

Not only has Mr. Hartman conserved the soil on his farm with this and other methods of erosion control, but he states he has shown an increase in the production of wheat, oats and row crops planted on his farm.

Mr. Hartman plants oats, wheat and Hubam clover in 30 foot strips which separate 90 foot strips of row crops. His clover was allowed to go to seed so he would have enough seed to plant the second year and use the Hubam for feeding.

Mr. Hartman is rotating the crops on his farm in order to build the fertility of the soil and increase production. Gullies and washes on the farm have been checked to some extent by planting clover in those areas.

--From Temple (Texas) Daily Telegram.



HONOR CORNER

To Cadron Creek Project, Conway, Arkansas, E. A.  
Hodson, Project Manager and Carisso Creek Project,  
Nacogdoches, Texas, G. M. Morris, Project Manager  
go the laurels for submitting the most and best all  
around material for the News Letter this month.

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE  
REGION 1  
OFFICE OF THE REGIONAL CONSERVATOR  
Neil P. Anderson Building  
Ft. Worth, Texas  

---

Official Business

PENALTY FOR  
PRIVATE USE TO AVOID  
PAYMENT OF POSTAGE  
\$300.00